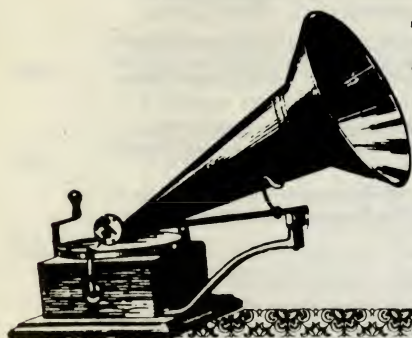
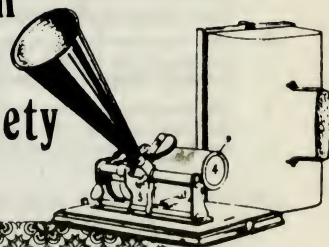


# The Hillandale News



The official journal of  
**The City of London  
Phonograph and  
Gramophone Society**  
Inaugurated 1919



No. 101

APRIL 1978



## SOCIETY RULES

1. That the Society shall be called THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH & GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY, and that its objects shall be the social intercourse of its members, as well as the scientific and musical study of sound reproducing apparatus, as well as its application.
2. That the Officers of the Society shall consist of a President, Vice President, Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Financial Treasurer and Meetings Secretary, who shall be elected at each Annual General Meeting in October, and who shall be ex-officio members of the Committee.
3. That the management of the Society be vested in a Committee, similarly elected at each Annual General Meeting, and with power to co-opt, and that its duties shall be the carrying into effect of these rules and objects. Written notice must be given to the Secretary one clear month before an Annual General Meeting of any resolution proposing to amend these rules.
4. New members (ladies or gentlemen) may be elected on the nomination of any existing member, at any meeting of the Society on the payment of an annual subscription to be approved at the Annual General Meeting, which is renewable twelve calendar months thereafter.
5. The financial Treasurer shall, once in every year, submit a statement of Accounts of the Society to an Auditor elected by the Society and shall furnish a Balance Sheet for the financial year ending October for the inspection of members at each Annual General Meeting.

President: George Frow, [REDACTED] Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 3SH  
 Vice-Presidents: James F. Dennis, R.C.S., [REDACTED] Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 1TW  
                   A.D. Besford, [REDACTED] Great Yarmouth, Norfolk.  
 Chairman: Christopher Proudfoot, [REDACTED] Meopham, Gravesend, Kent.  
 Hon. Treasurer: B.A. Williamson, [REDACTED] Liverpool, L16 1LA.  
 Hon. Secretary: John McKeown, [REDACTED] St. James's, London, SW1 Y 6PZ.  
 Archivist: John Carreck, [REDACTED] Chislehurst, Kent, BR7 5DX.  
 Hon. Members: Ernie Bayly, Dennis Harbur, George Frow, Len Watts.  
 Committee: B. Raynaud, F. Andrews, Dave Roberts, Len Watts.

**TREASURER'S NOTES:** In future, would members please send all monies in Sterling (cheques, Postal Orders, etc.) direct to the Treasurer, *together with all orders for goods*, as this will simplify our accounting system, and avoid double handling.

### MEMBERSHIP RATES:

U.K.	£3.00 per year	U.S.A. & Canada	\$6.00 Surface Mail
New Zealand Airmail	£4.00 per year		\$8.00 Airmail
Australia, Japan, etc. (now payable directly to the Treasurer, as bulk subscription has ceased)	£4.00 per year		

Overseas members are requested to send **STERLING DRAFTS** or banknotes, as check clearances here carry a high commission rate. The Society no longer operates within the Post Office Giro system. New Zealand and Australian Postal Orders are acceptable in the U.K. To save postage in mailing receipts, these are sent out with the goods or next magazine to members. **PLEASE MAKE OUT ALL CHECKS AND DRAFTS PAYABLE TO "THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH AND GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY"**.

**HEREFORD.** Details from the Secretary, D.G. Watson, [REDACTED] Tupsley, Hereford.

**MIDLANDS.** Details from the Secretary, P. Bennett, [REDACTED] Goldthorn Park, Wolverhampton, Staffs, WV4 5DE. Phone: [REDACTED]

**MANCHESTER.** Details from the Secretary, Clive Thompson, [REDACTED] Mosley Common, Worsley, Lancs.

**VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA.** Details from C. Gracie, [REDACTED] Cavendish, Victoria 3408, Australia.

**MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE** that all money should now be sent to our Treasurer, B.A. Williamson, [REDACTED] Liverpool, L16 1LA.



# Diary of Events 1978

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## April

- 1st-2nd** National Piano Museum opens its doors for the summer season on Saturdays and Sundays. Brentford High Road, near Kew Bridge. A worthwhile way to spend an afternoon listening to mechanical organs, player pianos and other mechanical music. Open 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. only.
- 3rd** Radio Solent (for Southampton area) 5 minutes past 6 in the evenings. Vintage records with reference to machines included. Programme by Jeff Link. This is weekly, and continues through the year.
- 5th** Recorded Vocal Art Society, Bloomsbury Institute 235 Shaftsbury Avenue W.C.1. 7 p.m.  
A Record of Singing Part 1. Lecture by Vivian Liff.
- 5th** CLPGS Manchester Meeting at the Bay Horse Public House, Thomas Street, Manchester. An informal evening with members taking a machine or records and each member demonstrating his items.
- 5th** CLPGS London Meeting, Debenhams Oxford Street W.1. entrance by Vere Street.  
Programme by Dave Roberts on his collection from the Auction Room. Doors open 7 p.m.
- 7th** CLPGS South East Meeting at John Carreck's house. "Old Stones", Elmstead Glade, Chislehurst, Kent (nr. Elmstead Woods Stn.)
- 15th** Last day of Science Museum Exhibition (EMI Collection). 10.00 - 18.00.
- 19th** Recorded Vocal Art Society. Bloomsbury Institute. 7p.m.  
A Record of Singing Part 2. Lecture by Bryan Crimp of EMI.

## MAY

- 3rd** CLPGS Manchester Branch, Bay Horse, Thomas Street. Formula for programme as last month.
- 3rd** Recorded Vocal Art Society. Bloomsbury Institute. 7 p.m.  
A.G.M., then Committee's choice.
- 10th** CLPGS London Branch. Bloomsbury Institute. 7 p.m.  
Gordon Bromly Operatic Records Special Labels, and recordings.
- 20th** CLPGS Midland Branch, Shakespeare Hotel, Lionel Street, Birmingham.  
Edison Site Tape recordings.
- 17th** Recorded Vocal Art Society. Bloomsbury Institute, 7 p.m.  
Handel and Mozart. Daniel O'Hara.
- 31st** As above. 7 p.m.  
Singers who died before their time. John Hughs.

## JUNE

- 7th** CLPGS Manchester Meeting.
- 7th** CLPGS London Meeting. Bloomsbury Institute. Programme by Barry Raynaud, also Radio Solent tape.
- 28th** Recorded Vocal Art Society, Bloomsbury Institute, 7 p.m.  
Operas based on works by Victor Hugo. John Freestone.

This Diary is a new feature in the magazine and members inform me promptly of any events include anything of interest to the collector, be it National or Local.

Programmes by our Society,  
Programmes by other allied Societies,  
Exhibitions,  
Collectors' Bazaars,  
Radio or Television programmes,  
Auctions and Sales.

Please help me to keep all members informed. Dave Roberts, House Manager, Debenhams Ltd. [REDACTED] London, W.1.A. 1EF.

## Chairman's Chat

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Members will by now be familiar with my irritating habit of picking out errors of nomenclature and dating, particularly in published works. I am pleased to notice that the distinction between a 'console' model and upright cabinet is gradually becoming recognised, as is the difference between chrome and nickel.

Now another of these nigglesome points is the habit of referring to Decca portables of the bowl-in-lid type as 'Trench' Deccas. Possibly the Decca on display for many years in the Science Museum (illustrated in our Centenary Exhibition Guide) has helped to foster the myth that all such Deccas have something to do with trenches, but the vast majority date from the post-Great War era. I suspect, although I do not know, that the 'Junior' models (an example was shown in the 100th 'Hillandale' with various hill-and-dale adaptations on it) were not introduced until well after the Armistice. I have never seen one earlier than 1921.

You may think this doesn't really matter very much, but what about the real 'Trench' portable? Yes, there was a gramophone of this name, of tall but narrow proportions, with the full-size turntable living vertically in a housing at the side when not in use. Whether this housing was the 'Trench' of the name, or the machine was intended for use in trenches, or was made or invented by a Mr. Trench, I know not. What I do know is that none of the three examples I have seen had the name anywhere upon them, and identification was possible only because one came with its original printed instruction leaflet. The latter also confirmed that the 'Celeste' soundbox fitted was original.

That reminds me of another bit of a misnomer, and the consequence thereof. Some years ago, when I was collecting only HMV machines, and had never heard of the Trench portable, I came across one in a shop, which I bought on behalf of an acquaintance who was specialising at the time in small portables. It had an obviously non-original soundbox, which I kept for my own soundbox collection, and I passed the machine on minus this vital component. A year or more ago, this or an identical example appeared in a London auction, catalogues as a 'Maxitone' because that was the name on the soundbox which it had now acquired. I had thoughts of buying it back, now that I knew what it was and had expanded my interest to most portable gramophones, but in the event it made an absurdly high price and I let it go.

Subsequently I have seen an illustration of this machine, still described as a Maxitone, in one of the myriads of 'Price Guides to Antiques' which clutter up the bookshops these days. Has this, I wonder, caused a sudden upsurge in the value of real Maxitones? They are, I would imagine, among the least collectible of all gramophones.



# The Body and Soul of the Gramophone

(CASE FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE CLOCKWORK ACOUSTIC).

## PART 2 - AN UNWELCOME CHARACTER BECOMES A FRIEND.

In the beginning, almost as soon as I was aware of being alive, I was rudely and in no uncertain manner made aware of the fact that I suffered from phonophobia (fear of loud noises) which like all the other phobias, has for no accountable reason, a completely shattering, devastating and disintegrating effect on anyone so attacked.

As we are talking here about sound reproduction, it is of appropriate interest to say that I started off in a diametrically opposing polarity to this subject by being phonophobic, and still am to this day; but being in greater control of events as regards noise situations, it does not trouble me much. When occasionally I was not able to hide the effects, well meaning logical reasoning on the part of others only added fat to the fire because they were incapable of feeling something that can neither be explained nor described. All I could say was that, on a busy railway station when a steam train came roaring through with a sound louder than thunder, I could be practically knocked unconscious while some appeared to enjoy the sensation. However, once old enough to use the railways at my own discretion, I had under my control the situations that led to these painful episodes which initially had set up an intense dislike of trains. The result was that I was then free to lose my previously adverse attitude of associating them only with noise torture and to progressively displace this negative attitude with the much more positive one of associating trains with my great love of travel. I consequently developed an affinity for trains, which I have always retained.

It was in almost exactly parallel circumstances that I had my first adverse encounter with a gramophone; because of the growing impact music made on me over the years, I lost my dislike of this machine as merely an instrument of sound torture, and came to associate it instead with the supreme beauty of music. So, in just the same way as with trains, the gramophone has been a great companion of mine all my life, and remains so.

I can just remember that day in my very earliest years when I was only about able to stand up, and my mother had taken me to see some relation to make my first acquaintance with her. Nothing wrong with her - she was a very kindly person, but she had this gramophone. I didn't know what it was - all I noticed was an object resembling a box with a rather ungainly horn and it seemed to take pride of place on a table hard against the wall on the far side of the dining room. In those days which still smacked of the Victorian era, it was quite a thing to have a gramophone - more and more people were beginning to have them just as they had wireless sets when radio first appeared. So, of course, my aunt was obliged to entertain my mother by showing it off. I was not consulted, it probably being assumed that I would fall for it. My aunt moved to the instrument, put a black disc on a small circular baize covered sort of mat, turned a handle a number of times until the disc and all started spinning and as she placed an arm on the outside edge of the disc, a gentle ominous hissing sound came out of the funnel. This was soon followed by the most awful, painful caterwauling I could imagine. Must have been some great artist singing, but it meant nothing to me who it was. I hated the thing and was only too glad to get outside on my way home. All subsequent visits to this good aunt were undertaken with the greatest apprehension. That wretched gramophone, far from being musical, was just another of these confounded noise machines, I thought. Anything to make a noise, and if that is supposed to be the way one ought to find the acme of transportation on Cloud 9, I must have come from some other planet! So what would I want a gramophone for?

As, from time to time, various and sundry social visits landed me in households possessed of gramophones which I always eyed with suspicion and sometimes got entertained with, I began to notice that some records were not as noisy as others, nor were some gramophones - particularly cabinet models which had just begun to appear. With these, you could shut the doors concealing the horn. Then, one day, another aunt of mine who had just acquired a cabinet gramophone, put on a record that talked, and some young friends of mine also had one or two talking records. This rather intrigued me as hitherto, they seemed only so far to have

succeeded in producing records of people going all out to sing like fog horns, or of bands that assaulted one's ears with a penetrating cacophony.

At a later date, I was out on a walk with my grandfather, for he and I often used to go out together. Along the road, we began to hear some exceptionally beautiful music coming from a house we were just passing. The music was so haunting that we just had to stop and listen. I don't know what it was, but as we listened, to our surprise, the door opened and a lady came out and asked us in. She had seen us standing outside and had come to invite us to hear that record again on her gramophone. I seem to remember it had an oak panelled flower horn and what looked like an H.M.V. "Exhibition" soundbox. (I now have two of these in my collection). This particular machine had a really lovely tone. After this good lady had entertained us with a selection of her records, I felt I had at last met one of the very few who had a taste for music as distinct from noise, and began to feel it would be rather good to have a machine with some records like hers! This was the first friendly gramophone I had met, and this marked the very beginning of my affinity for the instrument.

While from my very early years, I developed a strong liking for classical music, particularly in the form of symphonic and instrumental music, it seemed to strike me that people at large were more interested in loudness and plenty of noise rather than in music as such, and hence I was still not very happy when visiting people who sported a gramophone. In the next road, there lived a family the end of whose garden abutted onto ours. Very friendly people they were, and evidently they felt they were sharing their joys with every one else when they used to stick their gramophone through an open window for the benefit of the whole street.



*Guiniphone Gramophone, as mentioned in E.J. Goodall's article inside, photographed at the Society's Exhibition last August. It dates from 1929, and was also supplied in a metal case. Its U.S. version is called The Polly Portable.*



People with different tastes did not appear to exist as far as they were concerned, and I must confess that my mind became clouded with thoughts of sabotage! Sometimes, however, the strains of an organ could be heard next door. I was very fond of the church organ and they must have been as well, for nearly all the music next door seemed to be organ music. It came from a gramophone. So, if one could acquire a collection of organ records, this was my second incentive to get a gramophone one day to play them. All my records would be organ solos!

As cabinet and table grand gramophones began to find their way in increasing numbers into peoples' homes, many of the exterior horned types began to appear on the streets as has-beens. It was a pathetic sight in those days to see some poor old down-and-out trundling along the road an ancient perambulator with wheels still intact and hearing a tatty old gramophone with a crumpled tin horn grinding out old records that had been played until they sounded more like gravel in a grinding machine. At about this time portable gramophones began to appear on the market, and a cousin of mine in Ryde, Isle of Wight, had acquired one. It was one of the early Columbia models with a straight tone arm and all metal soundbox. I did not mind this machine as I had a chance to have a look at the records and notice from the appearance of their surfaces what sort of records they were. I began to notice the change in tone and volume as the needle traversed bands of different textures, and learned for the first time that the surface of a record consisted of a very fine spiral groove like the thread of a screw, guiding the needle along it towards the centre as it turned. It also became apparent that the sound was produced by lateral wave modulations in the groove which caused the needle point to move from side to side at the frequencies of the various sounds or notes recorded. This in turn caused the stylus to push the diaphragm of the soundbox in and out and it was this movement that pushed air waves of corresponding frequencies down the tone arm. Furthermore, I found to my great delight that amongst my cousin's records were classical items including both orchestral and instrumental music. So, for the first time, I began to really enjoy listening to the gramophone and developed an overwhelming desire to have one of my own until ultimately my aunt presented me with my first gramophone - a "Guiniphone" costing one guinea (or £1.05p). For that money, it was surprising how well it worked. Being still at school, funds were limited so that my record collection started very slowly, beginning with four discs - two organ solos, a brass band and a violin solo - couldn't afford a symphony; my friends used to lend me a few of their pre-electrical records piano items. Buying a record was a great event, especially when I got my first 12 inch H.M.V. record of a symphonic item for a birthday gift, and I recall how intriguing it was to study the track and actually see the sound modulations on it. In those days, H.M.V. 12" plum labels cost 4/6d (or 22½p); black label 6/6 (or 32½p) and when I dared to sport a red label record of Pachmann playing two Chopin piano pieces, it set me back an outrageous 8/6 (or 42½p). Until I got on my feet, I had to confine myself to second hand records off junk stalls and to the "Broadcast 12", a long playing 10 inch disc with the equivalent playing time of a normal 12 inch record. These cost only 2/- each and carried some really good classical items. I still have a number of them. My cousin died quite recently so that her old Columbia portable which sparked it all off, is now part of my collection of vintage gramophones; this consists of 6 H.M.V. portables, 3 H.M.V. table grands, one Columbia Grafonola (pedestal) and one Columbia portable - 11 in all!

Getting back to the original "Guiniphone", having a very critical ear I was soon to learn I was expecting far too much of such a cheap instrument. Certain high pitched notes of violins, pianos and of the boy soprano Ernest Lough did not sound as clear as they should do - an irritating reedy "cracked cup" sound. Then the spring broke!

What I did to that soundbox and many others; what I did about the spring and what I learned about soundbox construction and performance follows in my next article.

*E. J. Goodall*

# John Bull Records

## AN APPEAL

For a number of reasons, the John Bull Record is extremely rare to read about as it was a non-advertised record, which may seem surprising in view of the fact that it is not all that difficult to come across. A great deal is now known about the companies who owned this record and a fair proportion of the records have been documented, although there is not just one series of numbers to be considered, but quite a number. Exactly how the different series fit into the story that we, (Mr. Arthur Badrock and myself) have, still requires information about the records which were issued.

Anybody who has handled John Bull Records will know that various other companies matrices were used in their production. Well accounted for are the Beka Grand and Favorite Record matrices, in this respect.

Perhaps not so well-known is the fact that Dacapo Records matrices were used.

But beyond these there is also the possibility that Bel Canto and even Aga Records were used, not to mention the possibility of "own-recordings".

Besides the obviously Beka source John Bull Records, with their 40,000 series numbers, (and the much rarer pre-40,000 series), and the Favorite Records, which show their origins by the typically characteristic "-o" and "-t" matrix suffixes, there are a "B" and an "H" prefixed Catalogue series which need completing.

And then there are some John Bull Records which bear numbers in the 5,000 range. Some of the discs have the numbers common to both sides, others have a different 5,000 number to each side. This is a very confusing miscellany of records which, among others, contain some pre-40,000 series Beka Grand Record numbers.

Which brings me to another point, and that is, before one can begin to determine the sources from which the John Bull Records were derived one has already to have determined the extent of those sources. In the case of Beka and Favorite Records this has been done, but the Dacapo Records information is still far from complete although the bulk of the issued Dacapos is known.

As regards Aga Records and Bel Canto Records, no lists are known, and the only information we have is what has been gathered from collectors and dealers' lists. Nothing at all is known about the Aga Record in Britain except for the names of about four artists appearing thereon, including Billy Whitlock. With Bel Canto we are a little more fortunate in that we have a short list of artists who were on the records, but with no records details, and we also know that they were original recordings and not made from the masters of other failed businesses or masters used under contract.

To be more specific. We are currently working on the "B" prefixed series of John Bull Records, running from catalogue number, No. B.1. to No. B141, the highest known number to date. And we have a "Blank Entries" list.

All very fine, you may say, fill the "blanks" in and you are home and dry!

Not so! Due to the fact that the John Bull Record drew on various matrix sources there is no guarantee that any two records bearing the same catalogue number will have sides pressed from the same masters, in fact, we already have a number of duplicate entries against certain of the "B" catalogue numbers. This reflects the fact that there was a great amount of uniformity about the monthly releases of all the record issuing companies, especially in the light ballad, the comic song, and the latest "Stage Hits", coupled with the fact that, at any given time, there was only a comparatively small number of artists performing this material, and their repertoire was found on many labels, either under their own names or under pseudonyms. For example such names as Jack Charman, Stanley Kirkby, Harry Bluff, Harry Fay and Harry Thornton readily spring to mind.



## THE "B" SERIES "BLANK ENTRIES" OF JOHN BULL RECORDS.

We would be pleased to hear from any member who can give us the full details of any of the following John Bull Records. By full details we mean, the Title, the Artist, the catalogue number, the 'face' or 'single-side' number, the Matrix number, Any date, any other marks. Of particular interest are those markings usually faintly seen under the labels. Details wanted of John Bull Records B.3, B.6, B.9, B.11, B.13, B.15 to B.20, B.22, B.39 to B.44, B.80 to B.88, B.90 to B.94, B.96 to B.98, B.100 to B.114, B.116, B.117, B.119, B.121 to B.140, B.142 and beyond.

As the above John Bull Records are certain to have included some from Dacapo Records sources, we would also like full details of the following Dacapo Records "Blank Entries"

Nos. 34, 36 to 38, 62 to 64, 66, 69, 70, 76 to 78, 80, 81, 83, 85, 86, 87, 90, 92 to 94, 96, 117, 116, 131, 145 to 146, 152, 153, 157, 160 to 164, 166 to 168, 176, 179, 524 to 530, 625, 626, 658, 671 and beyond.

Although there were not, as far as we know, any 12 ins. diam. John Bull records, the matrix source companies did have their own 12 ins. discs.

Has anyone details of Dacapo Records 2048, 2050, 2055 and 2058 and beyond please?

Likewise, has anyone details of Homophone 12 ins. diam. Records with the catalogue numbers, 2037, 2038, 2043, 2045, 2053 and 2058 and beyond please?

And has anyone the matrix numbers for Beka Meister Records M.168, to M.174, M.176 to M.178, M.180 to M.182, and M.184 and beyond please?

I have already mentioned the Favorite matrices with suffixes "-o" and "-t". There is another suffix which presents a problem, and that is suffix "-b".

We have a working hypothesis for the "-o" and "-t" matrices, which appear to be international in usage and not confined to British issues - but why the "-b" matrices? We wish to establish that this suffix was used for British Favorite recordings for a short time only, and that it was not used on other recordings in the extensive International Favorite Record Catalogue, so we would be pleased to hear from anyone in the world who own Favorite Records known to have been made at any time between 1906 and 1914, which have the "-b" suffix to the matrix number. This also applies to John Bull, or Ariel Grand, or Lyric, or Philharmonic Records which were made from Favorite matrices.

Except for the Billy Williams records, we require hundreds of matrices from British Favorite Records for our listings, so these would all be welcome, whether from Favorite Records themselves, or from the "derivatives" just mentioned.

Would you please have a look at your collections and pass on to me any relevant information as asked for, to, Frank Andrews, [REDACTED] Neasden, N.W.10.

P.S. Favorite 7 ins. and 12 ins. diameter records matrices are also required.

## KING EDWARD VII AND POULSEN'S TELEGRAFON.

Some while ago I wrote to the Royal Archives at Windsor to discover whether the wire which carried King Edward VII's message, recorded by the Poulsen Telegrafon, was still in existence, expressing the hope that, if it was still extant, the message might be re-recorded on to tape if it had not "eroded" with the passage of time. The wire, which was put into a presentation case, cannot be traced. This is a pity, because I have been informed by our Danish member, Karlo Adrian, that a recording taken by the Poulsen Telegrafon of Emperor Franz Joseph's voice in 1900, has recently been transferred to a modern L.P. disc, and so it is therefore feasible that we might one day be able to hear King Edward's VII voice, should the piece of Poulsen Telegrafon wire ever be discovered. The wire was presented to Queen Alexandra.

*Frank Andrews*

# More Chat from the Chairman

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Musing on the possible effect of publicising the price of a Maxitone that isn't, I thought of a delightful little book which came my way recently on domestic gadgets of the period 1860-1930. This was just up my street (my kitchen is as full of old mincing machines and knife-cleaners as my dining-room is of phonographs), but I began to wonder how much faith I should place in the author's dating of items when I came to a section on mechanical music and found a picture of an 1899 Edison Bell Gem (they did not start making them until 1904), and an HMV Model 5 gramophone of 1898. It was indeed a Model 5, but of the 1912-22 era; clearly the author had inquired when the Model 5 was introduced, and been given the date of the Trade Mark model, which became known as 'Style No. 5' about 1900.

A few days later I received a letter from the owner of what I was able to identify as an HMV Model 2 horn gramophone, again of the period 1912-22, but which he explained to me was a Model 6 of 1899. The number '6' he had found under the motor-board (no doubt a factory batch number of some kind), and I felt sure he had seen the book I had just been reading, for he carefully explained that the Model 5, which was very similar, came out in 1898 so his Model 6 would presumably be 1899! All perfectly logical: it just happens to be based on a false premise - two, in fact, for the initial date was wrong, and HMV model numbers are anything but chronological. It makes one afraid to put anything in print at all . . . . .

## 'On the Fingers of One Hand'

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TREADLE MODEL PHONOGRAPHS BY RAY PHILLIPS

After forty years of collecting phonographs I know of only five complete original treadle-model machines; just enough to count "on the fingers of one hand". I liked the above title and first sentence so well that I've kept it, even though it no longer quite applies! If we count incomplete machines and one treadle shaving machine, all ten fingers can be used.

When were treadle machines used, why were there such strange things in the first place, and why are they so rare now? In the days before electric light became common, homes had almost no source of steady fractional-horsepower power. Factories had huge steam engines, or occasionally water wheels, but homes had nothing like that. Probably the only machine found in the average home was a sewing machine, and the treadle sewing machine was so eminently practical that they are still made and sold by the millions. From the invention of the tinfoil phonograph different forms of power were tried. Edison experimented with a "clockwork" mechanism, although it seems not to have survived, even in a photograph. I have never seen or heard a satisfactory explanation of why spring motors were not adopted at that time. Clocks and music boxes had used them for years. It must suffice to say that they were not.

That they were considered is shown by part of Prof. Tainter's patent filed July 7, 1887 and granted Dec. 27, 1887. In describing the Graphophone he says, "The apparatus is mounted upon a stand or table, and is adapted to be driven by foot power, or by a small water, spring, electric, or other suitable motor." Tainter had apparently long since settled on the treadle base, as the patent drawings show a treadle base. Also, an unpublished Tainter autobiography says, "In 1886 . . . . As this was before the age of electric motors, and their conveniences, the motor problem was a serious one, and after considering all of the various kinds that might be used for the Graphophone I settled upon the sewing machine type of treadle motor, as the best, all things considered, and the apparatus was arranged upon a Wheeler & Wilson sewing machine table, of the style in use at that time".



The first Graphophones were hand cranked, but the company soon brought out the treadle machine as its standard model. Edison, on the other hand, started with electric battery operated motors and soon had house current electric machines and also treadle and water powered models available. Water power was more practical than it seems to us, as most city and many farm homes had running water. I find many "city boys" don't know about this so I'll explain. A windmill can not only pump water into a water trough, but can also pump it up into a tank set about two stories high on top of a "tank house" or a tower. From there pipes supplied the home and the rest of the farm with running water. Machines were sometimes operated with water motors. Some elevators and orchestrions were, to name only two examples.

Treadle Graphophones were available by early 1888, possibly by late 1887. The Edison National Historic Site's records show the first overseas shipment of Edison's "spectacle" treadle machines as Feb. 19, 1889, of "diaphragm" machines (using the combined recorder/reproducer called a "speaker", which was standard equipment on all Edison machines for the next several years) as Dec. 3, 1889. In 1889 they were shipped to Mexico, Holland, Denmark, Shanghai, England (to Col. Gouraud), Paris (for Edison's exhibit at the Paris Exhibition) and to the various phonograph companies throughout the United States.

Although both the Phonograph and the Graphophone were offered to the public by the same dealers and at the same rental of \$40 per year, in 1889 and 1890, the Phonograph was the overwhelming favorite; so much so that a large number of unusable Graphophones accumulated, and production was halted July 1, 1890. In 1891 the local companies reported as being under rental about 3000 Phonographs, but only about 60 Graphophones! About this time Mr. Lippincott lost his mind and died, having already lost his fortune. While Edison treadle models were still in the 1894 catalogue, production must have ceased soon after.

A letter of Oct. 19, 1894 from the Columbia Phonograph Company (which then was a "local company" dealing in both Phonographs and Graphophones said, "the treadle talking machine is so far a back number, that there is absolutely no demand for it" and refused to take one in trade. (The letter does not say whether the machine offered is a Phonograph or Graphophone.) Instead it enclosed a folder (see illustration) offering a spring motor in an oak or cherry case for \$50. The woodcut in the folder closely resembles the box of an Amet Motor put out by the Chicago Talking Machine Company for converting both Phonographs and Graphophones to spring motors. It may well be the same.

About this time the American Graphophone company reorganized and took thousands of inoperable Graphophones and scrapped them. These were treadle models. They then began selling machines with similar appearing works, but with the machines adapted to use Edison-type cylinders. This is what authoritative articles say. It is my belief that many of the machines used the basic framework of the Type B and C "instruments", from actual examination of several very early machines. As far as I can tell, the only adaptation required was a new recorder and reproducer, with a modification of the carrier that contained the half-nut, two small new gears to change the threads per inch to 100, and a new drive wheel shaped for a flat, rather than a round, belt. A mandrel could then be inserted to hold Edison-type records, and the "works" mounted on an electric or spring motor. I am sure that many were re-used in this way. I have an electric motor Graphophone dating from about this time that has two interchangeable sets of gears provided! Electric and spring motor machines were sold; there is no evidence that any treadle models were. Edison's first spring motor machine came out in April, 1896.

Few if any treadle Graphophones were ever sold, and those taken back from rental, or never rented at all, were destroyed or remodeled as described above, and the treadle bases scrapped. An Edison phonograph "works" could be removed by undoing two screws and a spring motor substituted at reasonable cost, and the bulky treadle base (or electric motor, of course) could be discarded. Some of the works now mounted on early Edison spring motors may well have begun life on a treadle base. Plates on some Edison Spring Motor machines carry the words, "Edison Spring Motor for Phonograph", which would indicate to me that they were sold without the "works" as conversion kits, although I have never read any clear statement to this effect. In any case, destruction or conversion of treadle machines was so complete that they are now excessively rare. Around 1900 the Columbia Phonograph Company (now independent) sold shaving machines mounted on a treadle base for \$30 for one shaving 4" long cylinders, and \$40 for one shaving 6" long cylinders. Dr. Ellery Drake recently obtained the only one I have ever heard of.

Treadle machines can be divided into two basic types, the Graphophone, made by the American Graphophone Company, and the Edison, made by Edison for the North American Phonograph Company. There were three successive models of Graphophone, Types A, B, and C. The Edison was called the Class T, to distinguish it from the Class M (2 volt electric and the Class W (water power).

It is a bit difficult to pin down exactly when the treadle Graphophone was introduced. In some wonderful



material graciously supplied by Dr. Philip Petersen, several dialogues recorded on a Graphophone in April, 1887 are quoted. The Spencerian Business College was using the Graphophone in instruction prior to a convention held in July 1887. It appears likely, however, that these references are to hand-cranked graphophones. The Smithsonian has a hand cranked Graphophone of a type patented in 1886.

C. S. Tainter's patent 375,579, applied for July 7, 1887 and granted December 27, 1887 has a drawing of an "instrument" mounted on a Wheeler and Wilcox sewing machine base.

The first treadle model in production, the Type A, was apparently manufactured by Western Electric. They were unsatisfactory, (see Mr. Saville's description of them in a later paragraph!) Three hundred were contracted for. The material I have available does not give the date of contract or beginning delivery, but the last one was not delivered until July 28, 1888. In spite of this they were asked to make more, but declined, in effect, by making the price too high.

The Type A "instrument", as the graphophone portion of the machine was called, was enamelled in black, and had name and patent information stencilled in gold on the right side. A nicked plate on the table repeated the information. On the only remaining Type A, the table and cover are walnut; the treadle is of cast iron enamelled in black. The cover, table and base were apparently made by the Howe Sewing Machine Company. The center of the X-shaped crossbrace between the left and right legs consists of a circle with an "H" in it! I do not know if any additional Type A machines were manufactured beyond the 300 mentioned.

The American Graphophone Company was incorporated in May, 1887, and fully organized by July 1, 1887. In March, 1888 Jesse H. Lippincott bought control of the Graphophone and in August, 1888 of the Phonograph. The contract with Edison required that the Graphophone officially be called the "Phonograph-Graphophone" and the type B and C machines now in existence all bear that name.

The company was still having difficulty in getting a satisfactory machine built for it, as on April 30, 1888 Mr. J. H. Saville, General Manager of the American Graphophone Co. wrote to the firm of Woodworth and White asking them to bid on manufacturing "from 1000 to 5000 of our instruments". The letter said that "the instruments of the kind as presently being made for us (are not satisfactory) either in workmanship, finish or mechanical execution"! That was certainly clear enough! These unsatisfactory machines were the ones built by Western Electric.

There had apparently been previous correspondence or discussion with Woodworth and White, as their itemized cost estimate is dated April 28, 1888, and their quotation to the American Graphophone Company was written on May 1, 1888. The letter said that the first machines could be shipped during the fifth month of a contract and that 1000 machines would cost \$39.25 each, gradually reducing until 30,000 machines were quoted at \$23.75 each. Confusingly enough, the letterhead of Woodworth and White gives Mr. White's initials as L. S. and the location of the factory as Waterbury, Conn. You will see, shortly, why this is confusing. The prices quoted by Woodworth and White are for treadle model "works", as a governor, which hand cranked machines did not have, is included. However, although a "table and stand" is included, as is an "oil can, screw driver and leather belt", it does not appear that the treadle base is included, as the weight per machine is given as eight pounds. I do not know if Woodworth and White ever actually manufactured Graphophones. Mr. John H. White did make the improvements resulting in the Type C machines, and apparently manufactured the Type C, at least. More about that later.

It would appear that the American Graphophone Company leased a portion of the Howe Sewing Machine Co. plant at Bridgeport, Conn. and began to set up a factory in August, 1888 under Mr. Tainter as factory superintendent. In May, 1889 the completion and delivery of Graphophones was begun. It is my belief that these were called the Type B, as an 1889 catalogue the New York Phonograph Co. clearly shows the Gothic frame of the Type B.

On June 1 Prof. Tainter retired from the management of the factory, and "the factory has been in temporary charge of the President (Mr. James G. Payne) and Mr. White", this was John H. White. The Class B closely resembled the Class A except for some cosmetic changes. The upper works were all nickel plated, although the bed plate remained black. The patent information was moved from the nickel plated plate fastened to the wooden table and the right end of the works to a die casting fastened inside the left side of the drive wheel. The serial number was stamped into this plate. Drawers were hung both the right and left side of the table. The treadle base was completely redesigned into an elaborate Gothic style. Gothic was very popular in Victorian times. In the Type A, in the center of the X brace was a circle with a letter H in it. The Type B had a shield instead of a circle, with the capital letters A G C superimposed into an elaborate monogram. The Type A's treadle had a simple all-over octagon pattern whereas the Type B had the words



"AMERICAN GRAPHOPHONE COMPANY" cast diagonally across the treadle. There may well have been a choice of cabinet woods. The treadle base was still finished in black enamel.

The Graphophone was still in need of improvement and proving no match for the Phonograph. By September production of the Type B had apparently ceased, as "about the first of December deliveries were resumed" and the machine was now the Type C. Between then and July 1, 1890 2, 847 Type C machines were delivered to Lippincott and large numbers of parts to convert the older types, as well. A Dec. 8, 1888 letter from Woodworth and White to Mr. John H. White, Washington, D. C. offers to buy all the machinery and stock in his Waterbury factory being used in the manufacture of "your Graphophones", with Woodworth and White to assume the manufacture of not less than 20,000 Graphophones at \$23.75 for Mr. John H. White. It looks like Woodworth and White were still in there pitching, but apparently struck out. If they did they were lucky because the end was approaching. The Type C Graphophone given the Smithsonian by the American Graphophone Co. in 1900 says it was made by John H. White.

The Type C had a completely redesigned recorder, which is described elsewhere. Other than that, the only change seems to be in the paint colors of the treadle base. The basic color was now maroon, with the "AGC" monogram and the "AMERICAN GRAPHOPHONE COMPANY" on the treadle in gold.

It was soon apparent that the Phonograph was the overwhelming favorite of the public, and that there was no way the market could absorb the 5000 Graphophones a year that Lippincott was required to buy from the American Graphophone Company. A contract was negotiated providing that a royalty of \$100,000 be paid, which in effect was the \$20.00 royalty on 5000 machines, but that Lippincott could take only as many machines as he could use. As there was a surplus of Graphophones on hand, production ceased as of July 1, 1890. It was the end of the road for the Bell-Tainter Graphophone. Any further leases were made from the large stock on hand.

The Edison Class T changed very little from beginning to end. The early 1888 model had a "spectacle" phonograph works and a table and treadle base virtually identical to the Type A Graphophone. There was one very interesting difference in the governor. The Graphophone had a very sophisticated speed controlling governor. You treadled at about 40 per minute and the cylinder revolved at 160. You could not speed up the cylinder, as the governor would not permit it. Edison's "governor", on the other hand, had three balls that looked like a governor, but in effect was nothing more than a flywheel, as it had no control device. Edison's earliest treadle bases even had the same "H" in the circle as the Graphophone, which Edison very soon changed to an "E"! The arrangement of the drawers differed.. In late 1889 Edison changed from the "Spectacle" works to the single "speaker" that changed so little through the 1890's. This style of works continued on to the Spring Motor, later the Triumph, and well into this century as the shaving machine for the Ediphone dictating machine, so little changed that in the 1950's many parts for it could be purchased still from Edison "Voicewriter" dealers! Virtually all that changed were the reproducers and cabinets.

The basic treadle frame did not change from 1889 to 1894, but in an 1891 catalogue the machines were offered with oak, black walnut, or cherry cabinets. By 1893 "Cabinet No. 2" was in oak, "Cabinet No. 3" was in cherry. Black walnut was no longer offered. In 1891 a Class T machine cost \$150, in 1893 it was down to \$140. According to Allen Koenigsberg the Type T cost Edison \$60 to make (about 1893), however this would have probably included the table and stand. 1893 was probably the last year the Class T was offered. In 1894 Edison was stopped from selling phonographs in the United States. He reorganized as the National Phonograph Company, and in 1896 brought out the Spring Motor machine using a motor invented by a Frank Capps, with the patent being owned by Edison's United States Phonograph Company.

While I have never seen any actual evidence, except on the machines themselves, I believe that Edison also sold motors and cabinets so that treadle, electric and water motor powered phonographs could be converted. Also, he apparently "bootlegged" machines through the United States Phonograph Co. I have one Spring Motor machine on which the plate says "Edison Spring Motor for Phonograph". I believe that this was originally a motor and cabinet sold as a "conversion kit". Another Spring Motor machine has the raised boss, where the serial number usually is stamped, blank and enameled over. The name plate says "United States Phonograph Company, Newark, N. J. Patent applied for." No mention of Edison anywhere! This may have been bootlegged in this country or sold, quite legally, overseas and later returned to this country. In any case, the treadle model was as extinct as the dodo bird.

A few remarks about cylinders. Most of us realize that Edison-type pre-recorded cylinders were being sold by 1889 for both coin-slot and home use. Because of their exceeding rarity, it is not commonly known that Graphophone cylinders were also sold pre-recorded. A Columbia Phonograph Company brochure of Feb. 7, 1890 said, "For a small sum the possessor of a Phonograph or Phonograph-Graphophone is enabled to listen



to songs by celebrated artists, as well as the strains of the most distinguished European and American instrumentalists. . . ." I don't think that songs sung over and over by George J. Gaskin or whistling solos by John York at Lee exactly fit this description, yet they were enormously popular. The United States Marine Band started recording for the Columbia Phonograph Company about this time, and they were certainly of the highest quality. Years ago Ward Harris, of San Francisco, gave me the only Graphophone cylinders I have ever owned. He also gave examples to several other collectors. He told me that he had one with a paper label wrapped around one end, but he could never find it to show it to me. It would have been pre-recorded. I tried to play the ones he gave me, but they were unintelligible. One did sound like an announcement, than a man whistling and singing - probably pre-recorded. I have heard only recently that Graphophone cylinders cannot now be played, as the cardboard cores have shrunk, changing the size and shape of the grooves. That would fit in with my experience.

Now we come to descriptions of the existing treadle machines known to the author. First is the only Edison treadle machine known to have survived, a Type T of about 1891, Serial No. 4189. It is basically a Type M works on an oak table with a black iron base. Edison gave it, probably around 1891 or 1892, to a sister, Marion Page, who lived on a farm near Milan, Ohio, the town where Edison was born. After she and her husband died, the phonograph was left to H. J. Colman. Some years after he died Mrs. Colman sold me the machine. For another illustration of it, see *Edison, the Man and His Work*, George S. Bryan, N.Y. 1926, opposite page 126.

I am not at all sure that Edison was being particularly generous in giving his sister this machine, as the oak table had been patched where the drive belt holes were shifted, and holes filled when the patent plate was shifted to a different location. Also, the reproducer arm and reproducer are different from what one would expect. The arm is like one I've seen only on early electric machines sold in England. While the upper portion of the reproducer seems familiar, the lower portion contains an unusually heavy weight, which also shifts the needle toward the back of the machine. The needle of an ordinary "automatic" or Model C reproducer set in this carriage will not even touch the cylinder, as it would be too far forward. The arm has no provision for a shaving attachment, nor does it have a lever to lift it off the cylinder and lead screw, as on the English machine it travelled across a bar which lifted it when a lever was touched. I think Edison gave his sister a hand-me-down from the laboratory with some experimental cylinders that were not saleable either!

The earliest surviving treadle Graphophone is a Type A, Serial No. 00030 in the collection of the Conservatoire des Arts et Metiers in Paris, France. It is complete with recorder, reproducer and speaking tubes, and three sizes of cardboard-centered cylinders, 2", 4" and 6" long. The shorter ones have a wooden spacer to allow them to fit the arbors which held the 6" cylinder at each end. The Director of the Conservatoire told me, when I asked how they happened to have such an early and rare machine, that the then-director had ordered it for his office and that the Conservatoire had then just kept it! A more likely conjecture is that in appreciation of the gift to Alexander Graham Bell of the \$20,000 by the French Academy of Science that enabled him to establish the Volta Laboratory Association that developed the Graphophone, an early model was sent to the Conservatoire. In any case, they had the good sense to keep it.

Larry Schlick has a Type B, Serial No. 01217. It was found in a Pennsylvania barn several years ago and Larry had to give it substantial restoration. It has an interesting works. Both the Type A and Type B machines had large, heavy metal recorders that rested on the cylinder and light weight gutta-percha reproducers. Each had to be taken off the machine in order to use the other, although it was a simple thing to do. Larry's machine had been adapted to use Edison cylinders. It has a removable wooden mandrel shaped to slip a wax cylinder onto, and two Graphophone recorders with their centers removed so that an Edison recorder will fit into one, and an Edison "automatic" reproducer will fit into the other.

Dr. Ellery Drake's Midwest Phonograph Museum at Martinsville, Indiana also has a Type B, its serial No. is 00845. It is like Larry's except that it has not been adapted for Edison cylinders. It was apparently complete as recently found, except for a missing governor and a damaged cover. Both have been replaced.

The Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. has the third known Type B, or at least a portion of one. The works and governor of No. 04192 are currently on exhibition, but without a table or treadle stand, and it is not known whether they still exist. However, the catalogue card says that it (as well as the next two machines listed) were gifts from the American Graphophone Company on April 5, 1900, and that it had a walnut table and was a model of 1889.

The Smithsonian has two Type C machines. The first is Serial No. 03042. This machine has its table and treadle base which, to confound my description, has an all black enamel, not maroon and gold, base. The main difference in the Type C is in the recorder, which is much smaller in diameter, and has a polished steel ball



that rests on the cylinder in advance of the recording stylus rather than the inverted V-shaped bar of types A and B. Also, the recorder and reproducer can be swung down into position for use or back out of the way without removing either. This machine's reproducer is missing. The catalogue card for this machine was missing from the file, and Miss Carlene Stephens ran across the machine while searching for another one for me.

Also at the Smithsonian is Type C, Serial No. 06222, like the others a gift of the Graphophone Company. It is described as a model of 1890 made by John H. White. The card would indicate that it had a table and base, but neither can be found at present. The recorder and reproducer are both missing. A fine complete Type C, Serial No. 04872 was Alexander Graham Bell's own machine, and is on exhibit at the Alexander Graham Bell National Historic Park at Baddeck, Nova Scotia, Canada. Mr. J. W. Stephens kindly sent me two photographs, but they are too dark to reproduce. The table appears to be walnut, and the maroon and gold trim are very handsome.

An elderly doctor in the East was "too busy" to allow me to see his machine, so I know nothing else about it. Last, but not least, Dr. Drake, mentioned before, has a Columbia treadle shaving machine. He tells me it has traces of maroon and gold remaining.

There you have it; all the treadle machines I have seen or heard of. This article could not have been written 40 years ago when I started collecting. It was rather a lonely hobby then. Other collectors were few, there were no associations in this country and I did not know of the Society in England. No books had been written, and publications like this one were many years in the future. More significantly, half of the machines I have described were still in attics and barns waiting to be found!

My article on Bacigalupi brought some interesting new material to light that will be published. If you have any information on him or on treadle model machines do write to me or to our Editor so that the information can be published and shared with all our members.

My thanks to Dr. Philip Petersen, Dr. Ellery Drake, Miss Carlene Stephens of the Smithsonian, Mr. J. W. Stephens of the Bell National Historic Park, Mrs. Leah Burt of the Edison National Historic Site, and Mr. Raymond R. Wile of Queens College for their assistance, and to Dave Fletcher for help with photographs.



1) Dictating to a Type A Graphophone fixed to the Howe Sewing Machine treadle. Illustration from a brochure of the Spencerian Business College, by courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution.

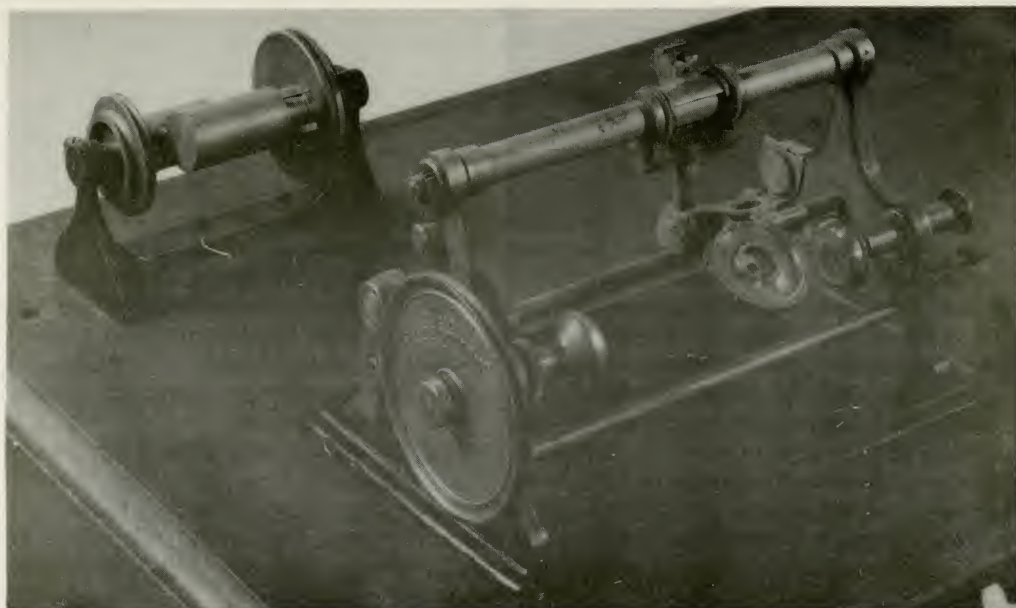


2) Type B Graphophone on the American Graphophone Company (A.G.C.) treadle. The machine has been adapted to use Edison type cylinders. Photograph by courtesy of Larry Schlick.





3) Edison Class T Phonograph belonging to the author. C.1891. Photograph by Dave Fletcher.



4) Detail of a Type C Graphophone. If there were a cylinder in place, the recorder would be approximately horizontal. Note how much smaller it is than the Type A (and B). It folds up against its support, and the reproducer (missing from this machine) hangs down from the upper bar which conceals the feed screw. Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution.



5) Type C Graphophone given to the Smithsonian in 1900 by the American Graphophone Company, shown without its cover. The recorder is shown folded down as it would be in use. The recorder (missing) would fit in the hole. To reproduce, the recorder would be folded up, and the reproducer pulled forward and down on to the cylinder. The recorder was smaller than the Type A and B, but the reproducer was unchanged. Photograph by courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution.



# People, Places and Things

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BY GEORGE FROW

One of my observations in the February issue was that there had not been any serious attempt to do a television spectacular to celebrate the Centenary year in Britain. Having sent that off to the Editor, Joe Pengelly told me in January that he and Donald Aldous and Hugh Scully had joined forces on a television programme to try and fill the deficiency, but that it was being shown at present in the West of England region. This of course precluded all of us living outside that area, but sound radio on the following Friday night's "Pick of the Week" aired part of this television show and played brief extracts. What I found enjoyable about the extract was the true-to-life sound of the original, the click of the records being put on the mandrel or turntable and the noise of the control, the Diamond Disc volume control being demonstrated, and so on, and viewers must have felt they were getting the real thing instead of perhaps taped sound being superimposed. There was only time for three short pieces in this brief selection - Blue Amberol "Little Flatterer", Diamond Disc "Place Your Head on My Shoulder" and the Schubert Trio by the New York Trio.

An American member John Fesler relates elsewhere in this issue of his pilgrimage to the Menlo Park "Site" - now rebuilt at Dearborn, Michigan - on December 7th of last year. I must say we have members who think of everything! He sent me a large quantity of photographs, some of which are reproduced in this issue, and these show quantities of snow lying everywhere and an apparent complete absence of any other sightseers. He was also kind enough to send me extracts from the Oct/Nov. 1977 *American Journal of the Audio Engineering Society*, which I shall be passing along to the archive.

Another friend later sent me the complete journal, many of its 300 odd pages devoted to Phonograph and Sound Recording after One Hundred Years in about forty articles from all over the World. The British contribution is from John Borwick, Technical Editor to the *Gramophone*, and I was particularly happy to see an article from Mrs. Leah Burt, Archivist at the Edison National Site, which shows that a woman can break into what has always been very much of a man's world. Her 'Chemical Technology in the Edison Recording Industry' is one of several articles from her that have appeared lately in technical journals, and features several pictures of the stages in manufacture of Edison cylinders which I had not seen before. This Journal seems to be restricted to members of the Audio Engineering Society, and is not a commercial or bookstall magazine.

My notes on Pathé and their odd-gauge projectors brought a note from Arthur George, a photographer member from Northamptonshire. Unfortunately I did muddle up the names of phonographs and projectors in my mind, as the "Elf" of course appeared as an Edison Bell phonograph! The Pathé Company produced several small projectors, the "Baby", the "Kid" and the "Imp" which was an improvement on it; Arthur George once owned a "Baby" with a hand-turned generator attached, such as appeared on the "Kok". There was apparently a "Lido" size of film, a split 9.5 mm with central perforations, which all adds further to the difficulties of researching anything Pathé.

The new London meeting place in Bloomsbury is a great improvement on the "John Snow", and we hope that more London members will be able to get along. There is already a small self-service restaurant on the premises, arrangements are being made for an interval cup of tea or coffee, and we hope these little comforts, together with an uplift of programmes will give the Society a better standard generally. At one time C.L.P. & G.S. was solely an all-male Society, where Edison-ites used to gather to discuss their latest finds over a glass of beer and a pie, and where wives were only expected at the Christmas Paty, a noisy affair completely detached from anything to do with phonograph or gramophone. All very well, but with the fading away of the old timers and fresh platoons of younger people coming along, the interest has changed very much into one of the research, history and background; the playing of records for their own sake has faded away too, and the contributor is expected to give a miniature sketch of the material on each disc. At the same time I don't think we ever take ourselves too seriously.

The London gatherings have always tended to differ from those of the regions, where the custom is often to exhibit machines at meetings, and I have been asked at various times why we in London favour the record rather than its means of playing. Basically this is probably a physical reason, members come straight from their place of work stopping perhaps on the way to have something to eat, and of course the problem of parking ones car in the West End is a deterrent; usually the only machines ever seen are readily portable. I think too that the earlier members of the Society took their Standard, Home or Triumph and their favourite repros for granted, but were always glad to show off their cylinders and to hear the other chaps', and that this feeling is still there in a modified way. Some of us who used to attend the "Horse and Groom" evenings will recall that there were murmurings when one of the younger generation humped a Concert phonograph up the stairs and gave a part evening of 5 inch cylinders. This was considered retrograde when Edison's Blue Amberol was the perfect cylinder. Once in a while 2-minute moulded cylinders in good condition were tolerated, and there was the occasional venture into Indestructibles, in fact Major Gerry Annand gave at least one evening of these, but the loyalty still lay firmly with the Blue Amberol. Perhaps there are others who can relate stories of bygone meetings, as my recollections do not go back further than about 1955.

To return to the point I was going to make two paragraphs back; please do come along to the Society meetings in the new place in London. It is a great improvement on anything within my membership experience, and ladies will be more than welcome. Our aim is for a larger attendance and even more entertaining programmes.

The photograph opposite has turned up in an old file, and although distorted and indistinct, I think it would interest a few of the members. It would have been taken around 1961 or 1962 at "The Horse and Groom", Curtain Road, Shoreditch at one of the regular Society meetings, which when took place on the second Tuesday of each month. Perhaps it was to celebrate the acquisition of the Edison bust, which was cleaned and repaired by Ted Lewis shortly after its arrival. From left to right the following members are shown:-

Unidentified; Ernie Bayly; Ralph Moss; the late Ted Lewis (chairman); Ossie Waite; George Frow; the late Gerry Annand (president); Timothy Massey; Bruce Moss; Leslie Kaye; the late Joe Cramp (seated); the late Reg Bignell (behind Cramp); David McCallum (behind Bignell); the late Arthur Weatherley (surviving founder member from 1919); Unidentified.





The equipment of those days was rather old-fashioned as "The Horse and Groom" was still on a 100 volt D.C. pocket of the City, and a suitably period amplifier and gramophone motor were necessary, but shortly before the Society moved from there in October 1968 the current was 'upped' to 240 volts A.C., and new equipment was brought into use.

## An Apology

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*"Owing to pressure of Society business and his professional Activities, the Treasurer has accumulated a considerable backlog of correspondence etc., and wishes to apologise for the delays. Priority is being given to orders and payments being received and the process of catching up will probably take some time."*

*The furious activities of our Treasurer and the risk of his bursting into flames has been recognised by a commercial firm who have written, addressing thus:-*

The Fire Prevention Officer,  
City of London Phonograph & Gramophone Society,  
[REDACTED]

LIVERPOOL,  
L16 1LA.

# A Memorable Evening

BY HAROLD MOSS

On re-reading my article "In love of a Voice" in our issue of April 1976, it occurred to me that another story I have might be of interest to our fellow members.

It is of the visit of Caruso to Manchester on Tue. Sept. 13th 1909.

Many years ago I used to be friendly with an Italian chef as I was a regular in his restaurant, and used to treat him to an operatic record occasionally.

Many were the stories he used to tell, of his father's life in Italy cooking from time to time for the old opera singers, one of whom was Caruso.

Eventually, all the family came to live in Manchester, and when they and their Italian friends knew Caruso was coming to sing at the Free Trade Hall excitement ran high amongst them as they all got ready to attend.

Caruso was singing at the Vienna Opera house at the time, and when the Manchester impressario Mr. Brand Lane telegraphed for terms he was told that Caruso was receiving £1500 per performance which came as a bit of a shock.

However diplomatic exchanges were made, and eventually Caruso was most happy to sing in Manchester for £1000, as a northern tour was arranged at this fee per concert, although there were 3 other Artists on the programme as well.

The Midland Hotel had just been built and Caruso was installed in the best suite overlooking St. Peters Square which had in it a Church & Gardens in those days.

It was a capacity house on the night of the concert at an average of £2 per seat and crowds outside couldn't get in. They stood about outside all evening with the chance to see the singer coming out, but as a heatwave was running the doors and windows were left open for air.

As the concert progressed they were able to hear this great voice swelling out into the quiet street.

My friend the chef in telling me all this, said that he and his brothers and sisters and parents were invited into the artist's room after the concert.

Caruso greeted his father as an old friend and they were introduced one by one.

The chef said the first thing he noted was Caruso's enormous chest and he looked so well dressed in dark mauve evening dress.

Caruso chatted to the parents for a while and presented them with an autographed photograph which the family treasured for a long while.

The chef said the memory of this occasion stayed with the family for many years.





*Lovely Lola and her Grafonola - It is a Model 109 portable Columbia Grafonola, circa 1927-8.*

# Letters to the Editor

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Sheringham Hall,  
Norfolk.

Tel: [REDACTED]

Dear Sir,

With regard to your reviewer's notes on "Joe Pengelly's Century on Radio 4" in the October 1977 Hillandale News, the Jose Collins record referred to in the final paragraph was played by me on my acoustical horn Gramophone. It was among a collection of Jose Collin's original acoustical recordings taken from the Maid of the Mountains, the Last Waltz and the Southern Maid, and included the L1155 mentioned! All were played on this Gramophone and taken on Tape. The gramophone was my home built 'Acoustical Ethereal' briefly referred to by Christopher Proudfoot in your December issue.

I can assure your reviewer that there was no licence whatever taken to make any special effect at all.

I had been led to understand that the B.B.C. were going to make a record to commemorate the recording century so I took this tape to them because the acoustical recordings come across incomparably nearer and clearer than the B.B.C's "Sophisticated Electronic Process" can bring them.

The B.B.C. were interested and asked if I could leave the Tape for colleagues to hear, and I agreed.

I then heard no more until someone told me that my Tape had been broadcast.

Your Notes in question start with a premise that the B.B.C. along with certain August Bodies must not be criticised! I have no quarrel with the August Bodies, but if the B.B.C. had had the courtesy to inform me or consult me before they put my Tape into their broadcast I could have warned them that although all the records sounded very near the same level, *one* was *not* an acoustical recording. It was José Collins Memories Decca K730 of about 1934 vintage, which I had included for my own reasons, and which was of course, electrically recorded. Unfortunately this was the one they picked for the broadcast and would account for the added maturity of her voice noted by your reviewer.

Yours truly,

Douglas FitzPatrick





**BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION**  
BROADCASTING HOUSE SEYMOUR ROAD PLYMOUTH PL3 5BD  
TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAMS PLYMOUTH 29201

28th February 1978

Dear Sir,

The February, 1978 issue of your magazine "The Hillandale News" contains on pages 38 and 39 some correspondence about a BBC Radio programme, "The Centenary of Recorded Sound" and with which I was involved.

Although I was responsible for virtually all the programme content, its compilation and its presentation, I was not responsible for the inclusion and spoken material relating to the Jose Collins recording. This was a 'package-piece' with which the producer asked me to start the programme and in place of Edison's test words coming off tinfoil - which was my original intention.

The Jose Collins insert was, however, used in good faith but in error, and this is of course regretted. I must point out, though, that Mr. Douglas Fitzpatrick was in no way responsible for, nor did he mislead me in any way with regard to the Jose Collins insert - as Mr. Haines suggests. As for my not realising 'the significance of the familiar blue Decca label on the record', Mr. Haines might like to know that inserts in programmes of this nature invariably come off tape so that there was no visual indication of its source.

Members of the Society may like to know that in January of this year the BBC South West in Plymouth put out a half hour television programme on the Edison Centenary. In the programme there was a visual and sound reconstruction of Edison's test words coming off tinfoil; the marrying of the vision and sound of Trumpeter Landfrey and a similar reconstruction of the sight and sound of Alessandro Moreschi, the last of the castrati.

Yours sincerely,

*Joe Pengelly.*

(Joe Pengelly)

The Editor,  
The Hillandale News,  
[REDACTED]  
West Finchley,  
London N3 1PG

# Menlo Park Revisited

BY JOHN C. FESLER

DECEMBER 5-8th 1977.

Several months ago I had decided that the centennial of the first machine that could record and reproduce sound would be no small event and that many collectors and historians would be desirous of holding various exhibits and symposiums concerning this landmark event. Being unable, due to job commitments, from attending any of the scheduled August 12 events, I decided to find my own way of observing the 100th anniversary. Although I had missed the "conception date", the "discovery or invention date" during the first week in December was still open to me. The place to celebrate the invention of Edison's Phonograph was all too obvious; the Edison Menlo Park Laboratory.

The original reconstructed Menlo Park Laboratory is located (and has been since 1929) at the Henry Ford Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan. Adjacent to this village of historic buildings and places is located the wonderful museum of the Edison Institute. Housed within the museum is perhaps the greatest single collection of artifacts comprising and resulting from the World's Industrial Revolution, both past and present.

On Monday December 5, 1977, I left my home in Central Illinois and managed to fly into the worst snow storm which Michigan weather has yet been able to provide this season. Fortunately, by Tuesday morning the weather had started to clear (not until first depositing *several* inches of snow, however!) and I was able to proceed to the Edison Institute. Upon arriving at the Museum, I found that I was the only visitor there, the previous day's weather apparently keeping all others away. Immediately, I was warmly greeted by Mr. William H. Matteson, Assistant Curator of Edisoniana. He was somewhat surprised at my promptness, although our meeting had been scheduled for several weeks.

Together, we proceeded to the main room (over 10 acres!) of the Museum where we examined the portion of the Institute's Phonograph collection which is on display. Mr. Matteson commented that the collection is large to the extent that limitation of space does not permit the entire collection to be displayed at any one time. Presently we saw several Edisons, Columbias, and Victors displayed from waist to eye level in glass cases. These machines ranged from the most common finds, to the most unusual examples.

Passing thru the aisles, I encountered some old friends: Edison Standards, Gems, and Homes, along with several Columbia Graphophones. Further on were displayed a later model Triumph with mail order trade flowered horn and an Edison Opera less its self supported horn. Turning into an adjacent aisle, my eyes caught view of two Model M electrics, and yes, could it be, a water powered Edison Phonograph! To my amazement, Mr. Matteson commented that a few other Model M electrics were in the collection of the Edison Institute.

As we passed more and more display cases, we came upon a fine exhibit of recording surfaces ranging from the early brown wax cylinders to the later Diamond Discs. Besides the normal size musical cylinders, there are displayed the 5 inch diameter concert cylinders and even the giant 5 inch diameter Blue Amberol Kinetophone cylinders, each used as the "sound track" for some of the earliest sound motion pictures. Mr. Matteson further stated that the Edison Institute now owns most of the remaining Diamond Disc masters. Finally, in conjunction with the excellent display of "musical" talking machines is displayed a complete exhibit of Ediphone dictation equipment and cylinders.

Just before completing the tour of the exhibited Museum collection, I commented to Mr. Matteson that some of the display cases were obviously partially empty and that I wondered where these exhibits were. He said not to worry as these exhibits had been removed to a far more fitting place, the Library in the Edison Menlo Park Compound. At this, Mr. Matteson suggested



some refreshment, after which we left the Museum and began our walks thru the bitter Michigan cold to the adjoining Greenfield Village.

Although this was not my first time in the Village, the experience provided by this monument of living history is so overwhelming, that each visit is as exciting as the first. Walking along Main Street and turning onto Cheapside, Mr. Matteson and I passed in rapid succession the boyhood of Henry Ford, the grammar (or primary) school he attended, the Ford Motor Company plant of 1903 and the home and bicycle shop of the Wright Brothers, where the first airplane was built. Proceeding from Middlesex Avenue on to Christie Street, we were rapidly approaching the Edison Menlo Park Compound which appears just as it did in 1879, only two years after the invention of the tinfoil phonograph.

Passing John Kruesi's Machine Shop of 1879, we entered the long two storey Laboratory by the rear door. Once inside, I wished to stop for just a moment, for we were now in John Kruesi's small compact machine shop of 1877, located on the first floor of the Laboratory. Viewing the various machine tools, each still belted to the steam powered line shafting, one can only guess upon which of these "Honest" John and Thomas Logan made the parts for the world's first phonograph. Moving forward through the interior doorway of the machine shop, we found ourselves in the long, well lighted main room. To our right was Francis Jehl's electrical testing table on which rested a bed rock mounted Kelvin ballistic galvanometer. To the left in a small darkened chamber was Dr. Haid's "assay nook". Walking towards the front entrance, we passed under several "converted" gas lighting fixtures which still held the carbon "horse shoe" electric lamps of 1880. Near the front entrance, a small office contains the desk on which the sketches of the first phonograph were probably drawn. Stopping just short of the drafting office, we mounted the wide staircase to the experimental center located on the second floor.



1. Laboratory - Menlo Park, Front View, Greenfield Village, Dearborn, Michigan, U.S.A.

Unlike the first floor, which is divided into separate rooms, the large second floor laboratory is one vast room filled with all the latest scientific equipment of 1879. Along the two longer walls are shelves filled with bottles containing seemingly most known elements and compounds of 100 years ago. Along the two shorter walls are constructed similar shelves. However, instead of more chemical samples, these shelves hold patent models of Edison's inventions along with experimental mechanisms ranging from Edison's Vote Recorder of 1869 to the Edison Effect (Diode) Lamps of the early 1880's. Scattered throughout the room are tables heaped with a collection of laboratory glassware and electrical testing equipment. Among the tables a series of tall mercury vacuum pumps stand statuesque with their evacuated electric lamps still attached. Finally to the far end of the room is a fine tracker pipe organ which used to entertain the Menlo Park "boys" with the chorus of H.M.S. Pinafore sung as:

*I am the Wizard of Electric Light,  
And a wide awake Wizard too.*

*I never cease to amaze you all  
with the things I daily do.*

*Whether its multiplex telegraph, or funny Phonograph,  
its all the same to me.*

*I am the Wizard and you know it all,  
for I'm never stumped you see!*

*No Never, Not Ever,*

*No Never, Not Ever,*

*Well, hardly ever!*

Although the second floor contains many interesting items, my attention was very soon drawn to the end wall opposite the pipe organ. Among several patent models of telephone transmitters sat most of the early design models of the phonograph. On a table adjacent to these shelves sat the remainder of the tinfoil machines in the Laboratory. The shelves held several expertly constructed reproductions of the first tinfoil machine of 1877. Along with these were several original examples of *Edison's Speaking Phonograph* of 1878, capable of holding up to 200 words (anyway that is what the original literature would lead us to believe). The largest machine with these smaller examples I recognized immediately. Mr. Matteson said that he believed it to be the original Washington D.C. or "Mathew B. Brady Photograph" model first demonstrated for U.S. President Rutherford B. Hayes in the White House.

Moving then to the adjoining table, we saw several other of the same smaller tinfoil machines once again alongside a very large tinfoil player. This machine was an 1878 exhibition model made by Sigmund Bergmann of Nero York City. Characteristic of this type is the heavily weighted, combination crank fly wheel. The main uprights and castings are massive but very beautifully striped and gilded. A lever activated split nut allows the operator to quickly release the threaded main shaft and hastily slid the fail covered mandrel back to the starting point under the fixed stylus, once a record has been cut. Under the Phonograph is a small drawer where spare tools, parts, and tinfoil can be kept.

This particular phonograph has appeared on television in the popular BBC series *America*. In





2. *Laboratory - Menlo Park, Rear View.*

one episode of that program, Mr. Alistair Cooke recorded and played back via the foil the trials of Mary and her lamb!

After closely examining this fine exhibit of tinfoil machines, Mr. Matteson suggested that we conclude our tour with an examination of the exhibit set up in the Menlo Park Library. Leaving the old Laboratory now by the front entrance and once again plodding through the snow, we approached the red brick Library building. On the front door, a block lettered sign declared simply "100 Years of the Phonograph". Pushing open the door, we were greeted by the recorded voice of a leather lunged announcer shouting: "Waltz Me Around Again Willie. Sung by Mr. Billy Murray, Edison Record", after which the song began. For the entire time we were in the Library, we were entertained by re-recordings ranging from a 1918 Victor recording of a Souza Band march to the *Seaside Polka* played from an Edison Diamond Disc.

For the centennial exhibit, the original furniture from the office had been temporarily removed and sitting in its places were a series of display cases. Exhibited for the visitor was a veritable panorama of the history of sound recording. Within the cases were easily seen both phonographs and gramophones along with original advertisements. Together in a corner case were an 1897 Type B Columbia Graphophone and a very early 1888 Edison Spectacle Phonograph. The Edison Electric was unique in that its mandrel was driven not by a belt, but rather indirectly from the motor through beveled friction discs.

Prominently displayed in its own case was a Berliner type "Trade Mark" model gramophone. Nipper was absent from the display, however not being a gramophone enthusiast, I felt no disappointment. The National Phonograph Company was well represented with cylinder players including a Model A Home and a Model A Gem. Victor was by no means excluded, two of the

best machines being a Victor II with its impressive horn and a Model 1255 Borgia II Orthophonic Victrola with combination acoustical and electric pick upheads.

While most of the exhibits were quite old, the one newcomer was a 1940 Wilcox-Gay Recordio. This machine represents a mid-century attempt to recapture the thrill of home recording so keenly experienced by the prior generation with their cylinder machines.

The crowning display, located in the center of the room, included a reproduction of the December 1877 tinfoil machine sitting next to a large portrait of Thomas A Edison. On the reverse side of this center display were presented examples of early recording surfaces, both cylinders and discs.



3. Edison's office, Menlo Park Laboratory, First Floor.



Shortly after getting both an eye and earful, Mr. Matteson stated that he must return to the duties of his curatorial office, so we returned to the Museum. Soon we parted company, leaving me on my own to savour the experience and to further enjoy the Edison Institute during the remainder of my stay in Dearborn.

One other Edison display that I did visit was a small laboratory building in the Village originally located in West Orange, New Jersey. In this structure can be seen the equipment used to develop the cylinder moulding processes and later the Diamond Discs.

Upon returning home later in the weeks, I felt satisfied with my unofficial observance of the Centennial. It left me with a most favourable impression I am not soon to forget.



4. Bergmann Phonograph, 2nd Floor of Menlo Park Laboratory.

# Something Entirely New in Records

GRAMOPHONE, WIRELESS & TALKING MACHINE NEWS JULY 1923

The recent announcement in the *Daily Express* of records made upon absolutely flimsy material by Mr. Pemberton Billing seems to suggest something of wizardry on that gentleman's part. He has already done some remarkable things with gramophone records, but the announcement just made goes, apparently, far away from anything which has before been made known. We have not yet had an opportunity of investigating this wonderful invention, but shall make a point of doing so shortly, when we hope to make a report from personal knowledge.

Meanwhile we quote the following:-

"A representative of the *Daily Express* yesterday saw his silk handkerchief converted into a gramophone record, and heard it play the Russian tone-poem 'Finlandia.'

"The record was then taken from the machine, thrown across the room into the fire-grate, picked out, dropped to the floor, jumped on, replaced on the machine, and again came 'Finlandia'—smoothly and distinctly as before.

"Then the record was heated, a new tune imposed in a hydraulic press, and within a few moments the ex-pocket handkerchief was displaying its second musical achievement.

"Mr. Pemberton Billing, the magician who brought about this marvel, says it is possible to impose eleven new tunes on the same piece of material, and an inexperienced man, it is claimed, can turn out a dozen of the new records in less time than it takes an expert to produce one of the ordinary type.

"Bring me an old record and half a dozen pocket handkerchiefs,' said Mr. Billing, 'and I will make from them six new records more effective than the old, and the whole six will not weigh so much as the original. We have made a record that weighs only three-quarters of an ounce—as compared with the normal sixteen ounces.

"I have made them of all sorts of material—pieces of blanket, calico, linen, silk—and the coarser the material the more efficient the records. They are practically indestructible; they may be sent uncovered by post, and they are so thin that a large number may be packed into a small space. When the records are put on the market in a month's time they will cost half of what are now normal prices, and they will revolutionise the business.'

"The patent is a spirit which Mr. Billing adds to the ordinary record mixture. The material is dipped, the tiny grooves made by pressure, and the amazingly swift result is, he claims, an 'imperishable record impervious to damage by the roughest environment.'"

The reader may well gasp when he scans these lines, and marvel how it is done, but hitherto Mr. Pemberton Billing has substantiated his claims as to his new inventions in connection with the gramophone and the record, and we have no reason to doubt the authenticity of his latest achievement.

We will ask Mr. Billing to demonstrate to us personally, and publish the result. Meanwhile it is difficult to see how soft and flimsy material, even when the record is made on it, can be rendered rigid enough to play on the turntable of an ordinary gramophone.

**Editor's footnote:-** *The name of Pemberton Billing will be known to many as the inventor of the World Long Playing Record of October 1922, 10 and 12 inch discs possessing a constant speed groove, and requiring a controller or governing device which gradually allowed the speed of the turntable to increase as the needle travelled across it. Pemberton Billing's company also produced the "Trinity" Gramophone - 3-in-one - a machine that could become a concert grand, table grand or picnic portable by adding or removing parts of the cabinetry. Has anyone ever seen one?*



# Blue Amberol 23164

I AM A ROAMER – PETER DAWSON

BY BARRY WILLIAMSON

A dozen or so years ago I bought a 'converted' Standard model B with Diamond reproducer and a rather good 27 inch, 9 panelled all-copper horn (not copper plated) with about 75 cylinders. To make the young collectors mouths water, I honestly thought I'd paid over the odds but I desperately wanted a good four minute machine and not too unhappily handed over twenty-two crisp pound notes. At that stage I boasted only a couple of two minute phonos and a motley collection of cylinders although I had been collecting discs for more years than I cared to think.

I was delighted to find my first Peter Dawson cylinders were amongst this newly acquired lot but my joy was rather short lived. I tried a wax amberol 'The Bandelero' only to hear a loud 'crack' and the record had broken of its' own initiative. No such problem with 23164 but as Sid Field used to say 'What a performance'. The band starts off at breakneck speed and Dawson makes a funny noise in the first phrase and several times during the first verse he makes a noticeable gasp for breath but later the tempo slackens a little and it is a much better standard. Many years later I tried this record out at one of our Merseyside group meetings and general doubts were expressed as to whether it was Peter Dawson and if it was, had it been recorded at the wrong speed.

The answer to the problem came only a few months ago when I bought another collection of cylinders (I might reveal the price in another dozen years) found 23164 and played it with much less expectation than on the previous occasion, but it was obvious in the first few bars that this was a different recording. Indeed it was the masterly performance I had previously expected. Not quite trusting my own judgement I called in a musical friend who readily confirmed my opinion that the first record was a rejected 'take' and the second the accepted one. Closer examination showed the length of the playing surface of the 'reject' to be about one eighth of an inch shorter. The only apparent difference is the small number 7 on the reject, the other showing 4. I have always taken it that these small numbers after the word 'Patd.' are batch production numbers but this is an assumption on my part.

Quite clearly some cylinders were moulded from a rejected master and I recall that somewhere, sometime, someone wrote that he had two copies of a Billy Williams cylinder which were quite different.

Members who find they have two copies of the same cylinder might like to compare them and I would be pleased to hear from anyone who has 23164 with the number 7 on it as to whether their copy is from the 'reject' mould or not.

# Notes

(SUBMITTED BY FRANK ANDREWS)

## APRIL 1911

American advices to hand state that the Sapphire Record and Talking Machine Company, of New York, will shortly place on sale a new line of phono-cut disc records and machines. The services of Mr. F. W. Matthews, formerly of the Indestructible Record Company, have been engaged for the purpose of recording.

The Boston Talking Machine Company also, are commencing the manufacture of machines and records.

The *New York Sun* is responsible for a "tall yarn" of negro "slimness" which is too good to be missed if too much of a "sky-scraper" to be believed. A traveller who recently returned from the Gold Coast relates that his negro servant having served him well was asked what he would like for a present. He asked for a phonograph, which his master purchased for him whilst on a visit to England. Once in possession of the instrument of his choice it was not long before the negro disappeared, and our traveller learnt that he had taken to the bush. The remainder of the story is best related in the traveller's own words:

It was a long time before I heard from him again, and then one day he turned up loaded down with deeds to land which was suspected of bearing gold.

I asked him how he got the deeds. He grinned. I cannot attempt to give his dialect, but he said the phonograph was responsible.

"I talked into the machine in the Fanti language," he said. "I said 'Chief, this man is a big juju man, and a friend of mine. You must give him your whole place if you want me to be good to you.'

"I went to village after village, carrying the talking machine, and saw chief after chief. I would place the phonograph so they could not see what it was like, and then I would say to the chief that I was a juju man, and I was prepared to prove it. He would not believe me, but when I had got him quiet I would turn on the phonograph and tell them that the great juju was speaking. Of course, they had not heard of a talking machine, and when they heard this voice coming from a little horn they would get scared and would beg me to take all they had if only I would promise to get the great juju to look after them. I always promised and they would make haste to deed to me any piece of land that I asked for."

That negro, of course, had no such thing as a conscience, and you can see what civilisation had done for him. I have heard recently, said the narrator to a *Sun* reporter, "that he is now the richest man on the whole Gold Coast, and he got all he has out of the phonograph I gave him.

Messrs. J. E. Hough, Ltd., are issuing several operatic excerpts in their new Velvet-Face list. Numbered amongst them are two from "Cavalleria Rusticana," viz., "Siciliana," by W. Virgo, and "Romanza," by Miss Elda May. Two other very fine specimens are the ever-popular "Jewel Song" from "Faust," by Miss May, and the equally popular "La Donna e Mobile" from "Rigoletto," by Wilfred Virgo. Robert Carr contributes two rattling good items in "Rolling down to Rio" and "Heva Hiva Ho." A brace of good humorous titles on the new list are:— "I wonder what the girls did then," Chris. Whittle's latest success, and "Let's have free trade among the girls," sung by Chas. Lester. The last named, by the way, appear on "Velvet-Face" for the first time on any records.



# SOTHEBY'S BELGRAVIA

## 14 APRIL 1978

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Including a collection of Berliner 7in. records, a Limania Horn Gramophone, a Diamond Disc Phonograph, an E M Ginn Expert Senior Gramophone, an E M G Horn Gramophone, a Zonophone Improved Gramophone, a Gramophone Company Style No. 5 'Trademark' Gramophone, a Phonograph Doll, a Columbia Type BVT Graphophone, an Edison Home 'Suitcase' phonograph, an Edison Amberola 30 Phonograph, Barrel Organs and Barrel Pianos, and Unusual Organ Longcase clock, Cylinder Musical Boxes on stands, a 15½ inch Polyphon Longcase Clock, a 24½ in. Polyphon disc musical box, a rare 11⅞ in. Symphonium double-disc musical box, and a large collection of car mascots, models, posters, pictures, bronzes and other automobelia.

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*Part of the viewing area just before our Centenary sale on 6th December 1977.  
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